303 blocks is placed on the ground. The woman sits during the work. The second block is placed flat on the top surface of the first, which is moistened and sprinkled with sand. The woman holds the top block in both hands and rubs it back and forth with a rotary motion, taking care to keep the two grinding surfaces wet. The rubbing and the action of the grains of sand as fine graters produce a fine, red, almost impalpable powder mixed with water. The skill in this process consists of proceeding in such a way that the gritty sand is mixed as little as possible with the wood dust. The skill of some persons is so [168] great that one can find hardly any traces of sand in their ngula (1).

[113]

1. On this subject see the monograph on ngula and its manufacture in the Belgian Congo by Dr. J. Maes in the periodical, Congo, 1920 volume.

In the region of the Mosengere, the apparatus for making ngula is usually more elaborate. A thick piece of tree bark is used as a basin. Four or six rather strong sticks are fastened to this basin, and to these the native attaches one of the takula blocks. A special device permits this apparatus to be fastened in place. Some natives even have an improved apparatus set up under a crude shelter in front of their hut, which permits them to make ngula while standing up. Four heavy stakes driven perpendicularly into the ground support a large basin of tree bark 15 centimeters above the ground. [169] One meter from the ground, horizontal crossbars are attached to the forked ends of the stakes, and one of the blocks of takula is fastened to these crossbars. An earthenware receptacle, held in the three forks of a stake driven into the ground beside the apparatus, contains a mixture of water and a small portion of oil. A brush made of a piece of soft wood is immersed in the mixture and permits the craftsman to wet the takula block at will. A small piece of a calabash holds the sand which is rubbed on the wood to grate it to dust. Despite all the skill of the worker, this sand gets mixed into the dust and must be replaced from time to time. The person making

[2] to present anything we have not thoroughly investigated. We have not stepped outside the geographic limits set forth except for a few incidental remarks. Although the cultural uniformity of the Nkundó-Mongo is remarkable it is not, of course, absolute. And if we have used the title Mariage des Nkundó (Marriage among the Nkundu), we have done so because it was difficult to find one which would be more appropriate for the geographic and ethnic limits of [14] this study. It is very likely that in most cases our data are valid beyond the limits we have laid out, but to generalize upon it before making a thorough study of each group would be contrary to all scientific method. The reader is therefore earnestly requested to take these remarks into account and to abstain from giving our conclusions too broad a scope.

Familial institutions in themselves and in their totality are outside the scope of this book. But since they are based on marriage, they have an important place within our framework. We must necessarily touch upon them, but we will limit our excursions into that realm to what is required to make the general description intelligible. On the other hand, the study of marriage throws a good deal of light on familial institutions.

The words "family," "clan," "group," etc. recur frequently. [12f 5% 64] The family is an entity smaller than the clan, and the latter is subordinate to the group. Since it is very difficult to give a precise definition, however, we have taken the trouble to make a clear distinction only when necessary. (1) [Editor's Note: Elsewhere we use

1. See Chapter V, Article III.

them more as generic terms or even as synonyms. In order to make family relationships and the expressions used by the Nkundó to designate them more comprehensible, we are attaching an example of a genealogical table.]

[13] I know of the following previous studies on the same subject:

Engels, "Les Wangata," Revue Congolaise, 1910, which also deals with marriage.

G. Kapteijn, "Familieleven en -zeden bij de Inboorlingen van den Evenaar," Congo, 1922, Vol. 1, p. 531. [15] This study covers

113 more ground than ours, since it even includes a discussion of the Mbole.

H. Brepoels, "Het Familiehoofd bij de Nkundó-Negers," Congo, 1930, Vol. 2, p. 332.

124 We have tried to make our data as complete as possible. We have given here not only the major trends and basic principles, but also the particulars, even those that seem most insignificant. They are always interesting, and sometimes more so than one may have suspected at first. All the material has been discussed over and over again, in private and in public, with very varied people at different times and places, and the points that presented the greatest difficulty were gone over countless times.

121 In general we have preferred to use the descriptive and analytic method. We have drawn conclusions and principles from the data. Although case histories naturally lengthened the text of this work, we have not hesitated to insert them at various points. They are the best means of bringing out certain rules or customs and bringing to life the psychology of our people.

121 69 In this respect a remark should be made whose importance deserves our attention for a moment. The examination of judicial cases of which we have been direct or indirect witnesses does not provide a scientific certainty about the laws -- or "the customs," to use the term so frequently applied (1). For not all [16] that is done

1. It is unfortunate that this term has become so fashionable, for it lacks precision. Indeed, it may mean simply "practice, usage," or it may be used in the legal sense of "a practice having the force of a law." Often a confusion between the two meanings is created, and all customs are considered to be legally obligatory, when actually, some practices are outside common law, and others are in opposition to it. For the sake of precision in ethnographic and ethnological works, it would be well to use this ambiguous term as little as possible and to distinguish clearly among legal procedures, the laws and custom or usage.

§37 their sense of the personal injustice involved. But they do not reason
517 out these feelings; they follow them spontaneously, blindly.

There is a greater awareness of the social evil in adultery. But it is based not on the philosophical considerations of this harm in itself, but on the consequences of individual cases for the proper functioning of society -- palavers, financial difficulties, enmities, quarrels, wars.

This it seems to me is the present state of their ideas. It does not preclude the possibility that the law and sanctions against adultery may rest on an ultimate basis of moral ideas. And more particularly it is quite possible that the moral idea [331] operates only in the form of a feeling of the great principles of fundamental natural law which is innate to all human reason.

§37 5) No one will be astonished if we say that colonization, far
517 from reducing the frequency of adultery, actually contributed to its considerable increase. The abolition of native penalties and punishments together with a great freedom of movement could not help but lead, naturally, to this state of affairs. Every informed colonial who is in close contact with the natives is aware of the situation. "The prohibition of corporal punishments which, according to custom, were the sanctions imposed against a woman's adultery have brought about a license whose extent can be measured by the degree to which a group is subject to our occupation. The forgetfulness if not the contempt for the promises of marriage is nowhere carried so far as in places where the customary disciplines have been completely removed." (Maj. Engels, Bulletin Soc. Belge, Et. Col., cited in Congo, 3rd year, Vol. 1, p. 77, April, 1922). That is why various persons have repeatedly called for sanctions against adultery to replace the ancestral means of repression that have been abolished.

But the decrees hoped for have never passed beyond the stage
692 of mere projects. Fortunately, another step, and a fundamental one,
177 has been taken in the meantime through the establishment of native
§37 jurisdiction (1926). Under the guidance and control of European authorities, native courts will turn the helm halfway back to the ancient sanctions, adapting these all the while to the new conditions created by colonization and by the introduction of more humanitarian

8: Müller--28 E-5 (1951-1954) 1956 FO32 Mongo FO32
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